

# The Washington Post

## Montgomery councilman seeks to end special pension contributions to aid credit rating



Montgomery County council member Phil Andrews proposed legislation Tuesday that would end controversial retirement benefits known as "phantom" cost of living increases.

Under an agreement last year, the county makes contributions to the pensions of general government workers, fire fighters and police based on raises they did not receive. Ending that practice would save \$7.2 million in the next fiscal year and more than \$200 million over 40 years, Andrews said.

The proposal comes [as the Moody's bond rating agency has put the county on a watch list](#) for a rating downgrade because revenues are down further than expected and officials are relying on the county's reserve fund.

The union representing general county workers, the [Municipal & County Government Employees Organization](#), is organizing a rally at the county council building Tuesday to launch their "budget battle." Union leaders say their members are being asked to make unfair sacrifices.

County executive Isiah Leggett has proposed a 10-day furlough for many government workers and the elimination of more than 200 filled positions. Leggett's proposal also eliminates raises and cost of living adjustments.

-- Michael Laris